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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

RETAIN OR DESTROY

CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

S-E-C-R-E-T NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY

COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO.: TDCS DB-3/650,938

SUBJECT: WARNING TO PRESIDENT DIEM OF A POSSIBLE COUP D'ETAT ON NIGHT OF 1-2 AUGUST 1962

DATE DISTR.: 1 AUGUST 1962

PRECEDENCE: PRIORITY

REFERENCES: IN

DATE OF INFO.: 1 AUGUST 1962

PLACE & DATE ACQ.: VIETNAM, SAIGON (1 AUGUST 1962)

APPRAISAL: SEE BELOW

FIELD REPORT NO.

~~SMITH BUNDY~~
DUNGAN
KAYSEN
KILDUFF
PETERSEN
SCHLESINGER
~~TAYLOR~~
BELK
~~[illegible]~~
JOHNSON
KLEIN
KOMER
RASKIN
SAUNDERS

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE: PARAS. 2-4: AN AMERICAN OBSERVER, FROM LIEUTENANT COLONEL NGUYEN VAN CHAU.
PARAS. 5-8: AN AMERICAN OBSERVER, FROM MAJOR LONG.
PARA. 9: AN OFFICER OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE (C), WHO IS BELIEVED TO REPORT WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS GOVERNMENT.

1. HEADQUARTERS COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THE COUP D'ETAT DESCRIBED IN THIS REPORT DID NOT OCCUR ON THE NIGHT OF 1-2 AUGUST 1962, THIS REPORT IS BEING DISSEMINATED SINCE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED MIGHT EVOLVE A PLAN FOR A FUTURE COUP AGAINST THE DIEM REGIME. SEE FIELD APPRAISAL IN PARAS. 10 THROUGH 14.

2. ON 1 AUGUST 1962 LIEUTENANT COLONEL NGUYEN VAN CHAU, CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (ARVN) PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE SERVICE, STATED AT APPROXIMATELY 2100 HOURS THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM HAD BEEN WARNED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A COUP D'ETAT OCCURING ON THE NIGHT OF 1-2 AUGUST 1962. (SOURCE COMMENT. CHAU DID NOT NAME THE INDIVIDUAL FROM

Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

S-E-C-R-E-T NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY

STATE	ARMY/ACSI	NAVY	AIR	JCS	SECDEF	NSA	NIC	~~USIA~~	OCI	ONE	~~OCR~~	~~ORR~~	~~OO~~	DIA	CIB

VTF EXO

TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

WHOM HE RECEIVED THE INFORMATION.)

3. CHAU ADDED THAT THE COUP WAS ALLEGEDLY BEING PLANNED BY A GROUP OF SENIOR ARVN OFFICERS LED BY ARVN CHIEF OF FIELD COMMAND MAJOR GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH. CHAU ALSO STATED THAT HE BELIEVED THAT BRIGADIER GENERAL MAI HUU XUAN, CHIEF OF THE QUANG TRUNG TRAINING CENTER, MIGHT ALSO BE INVOLVED. CHAU INDICATED THAT XUAN'S INVOLVEMENT WAS INFERENTIAL AND NOT EXPLICIT.

4. CHAU COMMENTED WITHOUT FURTHER EXPLANATION THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT ALSO BE INVOLVED. CHAU CONJECTURED THAT NOT MORE THAN TWO ARVN BATTALIONS WERE INVOLVED. HE DID NOT EXPLAIN THE BASIS OF HIS CONJECTURE.

5. AT APPROXIMATELY 2200 HOURS ON 1 AUGUST, MAJOR LONG, CHIEF OF THE CAPITAL REGION MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE (MSS) STATED THAT A CENTRAL TELE-COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER OF THE GIA DINH PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT HAD INTERCEPTED ON 1 AUGUST A VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST (VC) RADIO MESSAGE IN PLAIN TEXT ADDRESSED TO THE VC SAIGON/CHOLON ZONE COMMITTEE INSTRUCTING ALL VC MILITARY UNITS TO BE PREPARED FOR AN UPRISING AT MIDNIGHT ON 1 AUGUST. (SOURCE COMMENT: MAJOR LONG DID NOT IDENTIFY THE ORIGINATOR OF THE MESSAGE.) (HEADQUARTERS COMMENT: TDCS-3/518,127 REPORTED THAT ON 23 JULY 1962 THE VC IN THE SAIGON AREA WERE ORDERED TO CEASE ALL TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND TO PREPARE FOR A POSSIBLE COUP D'ETAT.)

6. MAJOR LONG ADDED THAT GENERAL XUAN HAD INFORMED THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT ON 25 JULY 1962 THAT HIS INTELLIGENCE SECTION HAD INTERCEPTED A VC DOCUMENT INSTRUCTING VC PERSONNEL TO BE READY FOR AN UPRISING IN ABOUT ONE

WEEK. (SOURCE COMMENT. MAJOR LONG DID NOT KNOW THE ORIGINATOR OR THE ADDRESSEE OF THE INTERCEPTED DOCUMENT, NOR DID HE STATE TO WHICH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AGENCY GENERAL XUAN HAD REPORTED.)

7. MAJOR LONG ALSO REVEALED THAT AN MSS AGENT PENETRATION OF THE VC OF UNTESTED RELIABILITY HAD REPORTED ON 1 AUGUST THAT HIS VC SUPERIOR IN CHAU HIEP (THIRTY KILOMETERS WEST OF SAIGON) HAD INSTRUCTED HIM ON 31 JULY TO BE ALERT FOR A COUP, AND TO MEET HIS VC SUPERIOR IN SAIGON FOUR HOURS AFTER THE COUP BEGAN.

8. MAJOR LONG ALSO STATED THAT A HAND GRENADE HAD EXPLODED IN THE GO VAP AREA OF SAIGON ON THE NIGHT OF 1 AUGUST INJURING SEVEN VIETNAMESE WOMEN AND CHILDREN. (SOURCE COMMENT. THE RELEVANCE OF THE EXPLOSION TO A COUP ATTEMPT IS NOT CLEAR, BUT MAJOR LONG BELIEVED THAT THE EVENTS MIGHT BE CONNECTED.)

9. THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE (SEPES) INTERCEPTED CODED RADIO MESSAGES ON 1 AUGUST ON UNUSUAL FREQUENCIES. THE TEXT OF THE MESSAGES WHEN DECODED WERE IN VIETNAMESE AND FRENCH, AND STATED THAT A COUP WOULD OCCUR ON THE NIGHT OF 1-2 AUGUST. ARVN UNITS HAVE BEEN ALERTED IN THE SAIGON AREA.

10. FIELD COMMENT. CHAU IS CONSIDERED TO BE A FAIRLY RELIABLE SOURCE, WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY STATED THAT OF ALL THE ARVN OFFICERS, GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH WAS THE MOST LIKELY TO LEAD A COUP ATTEMPT. GENERAL MINH HAS BEEN A VOCAL CRITIC OF THE DIEM REGIME INSOFAR AS DIEM'S EFFICACY AGAINST THE VC IS CONCERNED. GENERAL MAI HUU XUAN, FREQUENTLY RUMORED TO BE A MEMBER OF VARIOUS COUP GROUPS,

IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN DISSATISFIED WITH HIS PRESENT ASSIGNMENT AND TO HAVE HARBORED RESENTMENTS AGAINST DIEM FOR ALLEGED SLIGHTS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT DIEM PROMOTED HIM FROM COLONEL TO BRIGADIER GENERAL SEVERAL YEARS AGO. MAJOR LONG HAS EXHIBITED PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE IN HIS PRESENT POSITION.

11. FIELD COMMENT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ALL OF THE INFORMATION PROCEEDED FROM A SINGLE SOURCE OR FROM TWO SOURCES AND THE VARIATION IN DETAIL WAS IN THE ORAL ACCOUNTS OF DIFFERENT SOURCES. THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION (CIO) WAS UNAWARE OF ANY POSSIBLE COUP SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT ON 1-2 AUGUST. HOWEVER, AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME, THE NORMAL PRESIDENTIAL GUARD HAD ALREADY BEEN REINFORCED AND POLICE CHECK POINTS ALSO SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN REINFORCED. GIVEN THE ADVANCE ALERT BY THE GVN MILITARY AND SECURITY ELEMENTS, IT IS PROBABLE THAT ANY INTENDED COUP WOULD BE ABORTIVE.

FIELD COMMENT.
12. /AT 0200 ON 2 AUGUST, SAIGON WAS QUIET AND THERE WERE NO SIGNS APPARENT OF ANY COUP ATTEMPT, EXCEPT FOR THE ALERT OF SOME OF THE GVN ELEMENTS STATED IN PARA. 11.

13. FIELD COMMENT. THE INTERCEPT OF A PLAIN TEXT VC RADIO MESSAGE REFERRED TO IN PARA. FIVE IS NOT CONVINCING, AND RAISES THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE VC MIGHT BE ENGAGED IN A CONFUSION MANEUVER. SEPES CAPABILITY TO INTERCEPT AND DECODE A MESSAGE IN THE SAME DAY, AS REPORTED IN PARA. NINE, IS QUESTIONABLE.

14. FIELD DISSEM. STATE CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PAFLT.

END OF MESSAGE